

SITUATION REPORT NO. 9
INCIDENT NO. 2001- 005
DATE: April 12, 2001 TIME: 1:00 p.m.

TO: Governor John Hoeven
State Capitol
Bismarck, N.D. 58505

1. NATURE OF DISASTER: Spring Flooding.
2. DEATHS AND INJURIES: No change from the previous reports.
3. DAMAGES: Forecasts by the Grand Forks Office of the National Weather Service (NWS) call for the Red River of the North in Wahpeton to crest at 19.5 to 20.5 feet by April 15, one foot higher than earlier projections. The NWS based the forecast on recent heavy precipitation and releases from Lake Traverse on the Bois de Sioux River. The river measured 15.73 feet today; flood of record, set in 1997, was 19.42 feet.

Because of heavy rainfall, the St. Paul District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) began discharging on April 11 from its White Rock Dam on Lake Traverse. Inflows into Lake Traverse could exceed the 1997 levels and could fill the reservoir to maximum capacity over the next few days. The USACE is currently releasing 4,000 cubic feet per second (cfs). As the reservoir pool increases, the USACE may increase its discharges to 8,000 to 10,000 cfs. Discharges of this magnitude will likely cause breakout flows into the Wild Rice River, which may affect the city of Fargo.

Forecasted Red River crests for gauging points north of Wahpeton remain unchanged. The river measured 35.06 feet at Fargo where it is expected to crest at 37 to 38 feet on April 16-17. In Grand Forks, the river rose to 44.76 feet. Latest projections by the National Weather Service (NWS) call for a crest at 48 to 50 feet on April 18-19. Downstream, Red River levels at Drayton measured 37.64 feet. The river at Drayton may rise to 42 to 43 feet by April 21-22. At Pembina, where the river measured 44.03 feet, forecasters expect a crest of 50 to 51 feet on April 23-24.

In Cass County, water is flowing over the runway at the West Fargo Airport. County roads have been closed in 10 places.

The Wild Rice at Abercrombie measured 23.08 feet today; flood stage is 10 feet. Major flooding occurs at levels above 18 feet. Flood of record level, set in 1997, was 27.5 feet.

Additional highway closures reported by the N.D. Department of Transportation (N.D. DOT) include U.S. Highway 81 in Grand Forks from Columbia Road to Bacon Road. Water is on the roadway from N.D. Highway 66 from Drayton to the

Red River. Water is on the shoulders of N.D. Highway 11, between I-29 and the Minnesota line.

4. RESOURCES:

LOCAL: No change from previous reports.

STATE: No change from previous reports.

FEDERAL: No change from previous reports.

5. VOLUNTEER ACTION: In Cass County, the Emergency Vehicle Assistance Communication (EVAC) assessed the needs of people living north of West Fargo, where flood waters are threatening homes.

6. MAJOR ACTIONS: State agencies with responsibilities to support local governments with evacuation and sheltering issues reviewed their plans during a meeting at the N.D. Division of Emergency Management (DEM) offices on April 12. These agencies included: the Department of Health, Department of Human Services, Division of Community Services, University System, Department of Public Instruction, Highway Patrol and National Guard. The American Red Cross also participated in the meeting.

On April 12, 10 state agencies reviewed evacuation and sheltering issues in relationship to the agencies' abilities to support local governments.

In an attempt to avert potential breakouts along the Red River, crews are constructing emergency levees in South Fargo. Officials are hoping to prevent the breakouts that caused considerable damage in 1997. Cass County Highway Department crews are building a protective levee along the Red River from River Drive South and then south to southeast following the curvature of the river. The second phase of this effort will run east from 25th Street South on 88th Avenue South, to Roundhill Drive, north on Roundhill Drive, east of Riverview Road, north on Riverview Road, and then east on Libra Lane to South University. The Cass County Highway Department will begin 24-hour operations today. Volunteers from the Cass County Sheriff's Office Reserve will be asked to staff phones and relay requests for sandbags and other information to engineers, surveyors or other highway department personnel.

In the city of Wahpeton, work on emergency levees was 99.5 percent complete as of April 11. Remaining work included final shaping and stockpiling. The levees have been constructed to 22 feet.

The North Dakota National Guard is mobilizing two task forces to help with flood preparedness efforts along the Red River. The Army Guard task force will be assigned to Grand Forks County and north to the Canadian Border. Members will provide dike patrol and traffic control, and will staff the Grand Forks Emergency Operations Center (EOC). The National Guard expects 51 guardsmen to be on duty by the end of the day. An Air Guard task force of 58 members will provide support to North Dakota communities south of the Grand Forks-Steele County line. This task force includes 16 engineers who have been assisting with dike patrols in Wahpeton. Forty-two guardsmen will work in the Fargo area. The National Guard has also transported a sandbag machine from the Wahpeton area to the city of Fargo for its flood fight efforts.

Staff from the Food Distribution Program at the N.D. Department of Public Instruction contacted the DEM Operations Officer to discuss potential emergency feeding needs.

The Grand Forks Air Force Base has established 24-hour operations and is coordinating volunteers to help the city of Grand Forks in its flood preparedness efforts.

Staff from the Bismarck Office of the NWS are providing technical assistance on flood forecasting information in the State EOC. The Grand Forks Office of NWS is conducting conference calls with state and federal agencies.

The N.D. Department of Health provided the Richland County Health District with brochures related to mold cleanup, disinfecting flooded wells and repairing flooded homes.

Personnel DEM have provided briefings to the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Small Business Administration and the N.D. Tax Department.

A number of flood preparedness activities are underway in Pembina County, including dike construction and sandbagging. The Pembina County public works crews delivered three truckloads of sand to the city of Pembina and two truckloads to the city of Neche. In Pembina, officials requested USACE assistance with closing a dike that will provide protection up to 53 feet for two nearby homes, a city park and a ball diamond in South Pembina. School children filled 3,000 sandbags that are available for use by city residents. The Forest Service provided a generator for emergency operations use. In Neche, contractors completed a dike on the north end of town. The dike developed a small leak, which was repaired after USACE staff provided technical assistance. Neche school children filled 2,000 sandbags. In Bathgate, officials reported that considerable progress was made on construction of an earthen dike. Crews were able to complete 350 feet of the 900-foot dike. Grating that the county received from Camp Gilbert C. Grafton allowed road crews access to borrow material at a farmstead. The County EOC has been activated.

7. ASSISTANCE NEEDED: No additional requests have been received.
8. OUTSIDE HELP ON SCENE: The Governor's Office, the Adjutant General, DEM, State Water Commission, N.D. DOT, Civil Air Patrol, U.S. Geological Survey, USACE and National Guard officials have been on-site in several areas.
9. OTHER: Appropriate state and local emergency operations plans have been implemented.

Situation Reports published by North Dakota Emergency Management are posted on the Division's Internet home page. The address is <http://www.state.nd.us/dem>.

Douglas C. Friez, State Director